

PORTLAND, ME., 15th of November, 1876.

DEAR SIR,

At its August meeting, the attention of the CUMBERLAND COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY was called to an alleged "Opium Antidote," which a member had found to contain morphine, and the undersigned were appointed a committee to obtain a quantitative analysis of the preparation. While this investigation was proceeding, another so-called "Opium Antidote" was brought to the notice of the committee, and was subjected to a similar examination.

The first specimen, manufactured by Mrs. J. A. Drollinger, of La Porte, Indiana, was analyzed by Walz and Stillwell, Chemists, New York City, who found it to consist of glycerine colored with aniline red and containing in solution 1.383 per cent. by weight of the sulphate of morphia—about seven grains to the ounce.

The second was the preparation of "Dr. S. B. Collins, the great Narcologist of the Age," of La Porte, Indiana. The analysis of this was made by Dr. Henry Carmichael, Professor of Chemistry in Bowdoin College and Assayer of the State of Maine, and differed from the preceding only in the amount of the sulphate of morphia shown to be present, namely, 3.2 per cent. A teaspoonful (a dose frequently prescribed by the proprietor) would contain almost two grains of the morphia—nearly twelve times the ordinary medicinal dose.

The Society instructed the Committee to publish the result of the investigations, in order that the large number of opium-eaters in this country who are earnestly striving to overcome their health-destroying habit may be seasonably warned against these widely-advertised nostrums, which, while promising a safe and sure cure, only serve to increase the appetite for opium until it finally becomes unconquerable.

This circular is sent to every physician and editor in the State of Maine, and to many other persons of prominence and influence, who will be able to give wide publicity to these facts and thus help diminish the prevalence of the opium habit, which is yearly destroying great numbers of our people. Opium eating is usually practised without the knowledge of friends, and the attempts at cure are often equally secret; therefore the information which has been acquired concerning these dangerous preparations must be extensively disseminated in order to certainly reach those for whose benefit only it was sought. Will you assist in the work by making known these facts in your neighborhood?

FREDERIC HENRY GERRISH, M. D.,
GEORGE F. FRENCH, M. D.,
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} Committee.

